

Dispatch

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1910.

THE BAYLOR SURVEY AND THE TONGERS.

The reception accorded to the Byrd-Wickham oyster bill from certain quarters of the State has not, of course, been unexpected. In fact, those who know the peculiar reverence which Tidewater has for the Baylor Survey would have been surprised had not that section greeted the bill with a storm of protest. But the extent of this storm as exhibited in the Tide-water press and as voiced before the joint committee on Wednesday is certainly out of proportion to the mild terms of the bill.

The objections raised by the Eastern press and the arguments which are being hurled at every legislator from Stafford to Princess Anne run the whole gamut of condemnation. The Byrd-Wickham bill is held up by some as an illegal, unwarranted and partisan effort to rob the tongsers of their birthright. By others, even when so deliberate and fair as the Newport News Press and the Accomac News, it is regarded as, at best, a mistaken attempt to better the interest of the industry. Between these two extremes there are as many tones of criticism and abuse as there are papers in Tide-water, with only a meek voice here and there pleading for compromise.

The chief ground upon which all this protestation is based seems to be the exclusion of a part of Brown's Shoal from the proposed lines of the open natural rock. Chairman Lee has stated in print that not one acre of this shoal, as now used by white tongsers, will be excluded from the new lines. But apparently this avails nothing. Yet, even granting that Mr. Lee is mistaken and that productive natural rocks will, by the new lines, be excluded, does this affect the natural and inevitable justice of such a procedure? The tongsers may dispute it and argue it as they will, but it appears certain and settled that the fostering of private planting will alone recuperate our rocks. In the long run, the participation of private capital will alone protect the general interest. Planters should be considered as well as tongsers; their stock of oysters must be kept up just as must the market oysters of the licensed tongsers.

Aside from the simple and basic question of equity involved, it seems to us that common business sense should prompt the opposition to yield this point. Under the terms of the Byrd-Wickham bill the tongsers certainly gain more than they lose. At present, in 18,000 acres included in the Baylor Survey, the tongsers can profitably work only 3,000 acres. Under the new lines, of a total of 14,000 acres, they can now 4,000 productive acres. In other cases the passage of this bill would open the way for the recuperation of at least 4,000 additional depleted acres. This bargain strikes us as a very satisfactory one for the tongsers.

The other objections to the bill, as voiced in the objections from Tide-water fall back on all often-thrashed issues, and spring from one single unsound premise. Tidewater owns the oysters and should be left alone to enjoy them. Men from the Valley and men from Piedmont need not interfere. It is perhaps useless to protest against this view, and certainly useless to point out that Virginia, as a whole, has just as much right to reap profit from the taxation of Tidewater oyster rocks as the whole State has to reap a profit from taxes on cattle in southwest Virginia. Tidewater's mistaken impression is deep-rooted. It is only to be overcome by a law which will clearly reveal the purpose of Virginia to consider the oysters as a portion of the State's natural wealth, not for the benefit of a few, but for the best interests of the entire Commonwealth.

MR. TAFT AND THE TARIFF.

The New York World traces Mr. Taft's veering attitude toward the tariff by a series of instructive exhibits from his own speeches. Three of these give a fair idea of the whole. In September 22, 1908, Mr. Taft, then candidate, said: "The revision of the tariff which Republicans desire is a vision which shall reduce excessive duties and at the same time preserve the industries of the country. . . . I wish there to be no doubt in respect to the revision of the tariff." The same Aldrich tariff act was passed; everybody knows what it is; and on August 5, 1909, after signing the bill, Mr. Taft said: "This law is not a perfect tariff law or a complete compliance with the promise made in the Republican platform, strictly interpreted." Now, the 12th of February, we find him saying: "Nothing was expressly said in a platform that this revision was to be a downward revision. . . . I therefore venture to repeat the remark I have had occasion to make before, that a present custom law is the best that has ever been passed."

Is the President as sincerely desirous now as he was in September, 1908, means to the world will not be fully

THE REVISED MILK BILL.

Mr. Throckmorton's much lambasted milk bill has passed through so many transformations since it was first introduced that it is hardly recognizable in its present version. It is fair to say that it is a much less objectionable bill now than it was before people in all parts of the State began pounding it. The provision empowering the Dairy and Food Commissioner to fix regulations for all communities has vanished, and this was decidedly the worst feature in the measure as originally written. The present version has only two features. One of them provides for an appeal from local to State authorities. The other provides that no man can be appointed a milk inspector anywhere without a license from the Dairy and Food Commissioner. One of these provisions is not bad, and the other one is.

The community's right to make its milk standards as stiff as it likes must not be interfered with. The local health officers are doing a priceless work in cutting off the old sources of danger and ill health, and they must not be balked and hampered. But it is important, at the same time, that we should not lose sight of the reasonable rights of the dairymen. The great majority of these men are entirely honest and anxious to comply with such regulations as the local authorities may lay down. They have large capital invested in their business; they are engaged in an industry whose upbuilding is of great importance to the State; and they should be protected from even the chance and suspicion of injustice. The best inspector is likely to make mistakes in his rulings. The most honest and upright health officer is humanly prejudiced in favor of his inspector, whom he has appointed, and thus hardship may be done to the dairymen in the enforcement of rules which are in themselves wholly fair and reasonable.

It is no relaxation of high standards to make full allowance for the human tendency to err. In the nature of the case we must give a despotic power to the local health authorities, the power to take a man's living away, and it is proper to bestow along with this power the right of full appeal from it. We see no objection to allowing a final appeal on individual cases to State officers, as this bill proposes. No one will argue that Dr. Ennion Williams, for example, is likely to do anything to the injury of the milk supply and the detriment of the public health. But the Throckmorton bill, though authorizing these appeals, is defective in providing no machinery to carry them out. No appropriation is made for the expenses of hearings, no power bestowed to summon witnesses and compel the attendance of the local inspector or officers. Would such a right of appeal be of much use to an aggrieved dairymen in Abingdon, say? We doubt it. We fear that the costs and the trouble would exceed anything he had to gain.

The other provision in Mr. Throckmorton's bill is bad. In a measure, it would do indirectly what his original bill did directly: I. e., give the Dairy and Food Commissioner the power to fix the standards for the State. It is sometimes said that the courts make the laws, and this provision would give the commissioner power to pack the courts. His approval would be necessary to make any man an inspector, and if he himself happened to be a man with lax, peculiar or wrong ideas he might force upon communities inspectors who would hamper or even seriously injure the splendid work which the local health boards are doing. And there is no occasion in the world why this great power and patronage should be put into his hands or those of any one man. The commissioner has nothing to do with it. The local health boards are closely responsible to their communities and better able than anybody else to choose men for local needs and to carry out local regulations.

The vast improvement in conditions that has taken place under the present system is the best possible tribute to it. No interference with it is justified except in the way of legislating a fixed minimum standard for all communities and of insuring ample right of appeal to the dairymen. The first of these Mr. Throckmorton does not attempt. The second he offers in a form of doubtful value and coupled with an undesirable provision which more than outweighs its merits. Therefore his bill is without justification and ought to be rejected.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF GOOD HEALTH.

They are taking good health as a matter of course in Panama. Yellow fever scares fall flat; rumors of coming plagues are laughed out of court. Science has triumphed, and the thousands of workmen along the Canal Zone know it. So confident are they that the scourge of the Isthmus has been blotted out that an occasional imported case of yellow fever alarms no one. Thus, for example, the last number of the Panama Record notes in the most casual way that a sailor died in the zone of yellow fever contracted at Cartagena. Proper precautions were taken; the incident was closed. No one dreamed of a second case.

What this triumph means to Panama and to the building of our big ditch in now ancient history. The contrast between the Panama of to-day, sound, healthy and blossoming, and the Panama of De Lesseps's time, pest-ridden and God-forsaken, tells its own story. Without such a change our American laborers would have died by thousands, as did the hapless Frenchmen who first sought to connect the two oceans. Without such a change the canal could never have been dug.

What this triumph of American engineering and surgery along the zone means to the world will not be fully

seen and understood for a generation. The object-lesson must first become familiar to nations. They must see that what our sanitarians did for Cuba and for Panama, other men can do for the rest of the world. They must see that yellow fever is not the only disease that science can make an empty name. The world, in short, must realize that the conquest of this scourge in tropical countries, the stamping out of smallpox in the Philippines, the eradication of plague in San Francisco and the extermination of typhoid fever in Germany are but different phases of the same great truth. They will learn that disease is a relative quantity, fixed and determined solely by the skill or by the carelessness of men.

When this truth is driven home to every nation a new era will begin. An extension of human life that now seems chimerical will be an assured fact; suffering that now appalls every one who stops to think will be blotted out; happiness will increase; prosperity will leap forward; poverty and crime will dwindle and diminish; a stronger, better race of men can press on to higher goals of human endeavor. Able in body, they will be bolder in spirit; healthier and happier, they will be nobler in their acts and deeds.

It is no empty dream to hope for this truly golden age. Slowly but surely the minds of men are turning towards the scientific care and development of human-kind; gradually but without relapse, men are becoming more interested in the common and ultimate good, more ready to aid their fellow men. As this spirit broadens it will slowly teach men that the mad fight for fortune, for gain, for political honor is a minor affair, scarcely worth their endeavor. It will show them that the care of men's bodies and the cure of men's souls is the bigger and realer goal for honest endeavor.

Does the State of Virginia support a school system for the good of the schools, or for something else? A vote for the Love bill, unaccompanied by any proof against the merits of the schools under the present management, indicates that the system is supported for something else. Nobody has yet stood up in behalf of this bill and made any argument based on the good of the schools. The strong sentiment behind it seems to be a desire to "re-buke" the State Board of Education. It is difficult to deal patiently with argument such as this. To "re-buke" these "arrogant" gentlemen at the expense of education in Virginia would be a piece of pollicating statesmanship which the Democratic party simply cannot afford to father. The clamping down of one of the faithful but incompetent upon a protesting community, which this wrong-headed bill logically leads the way to, would be not only a heavy blow to our school system, but the very worst sort of pollicy.

The one drawback and danger about this vernal weather is that it may tempt the irresistible sprinkpotes of the legislature to grab their lyres and bust loose.

We fear that New York will seem pretty wild to Mr. Roosevelt after Africa. A contemporary headline mentions "A Colonialism at the Bar." Here's how?

The Spanish Claims Commission has been on the job for a long time, thereby having been in position to cash a few claims of its own.

REGRET HEMPHILL'S MOVE.

Extract from Resolutions Adopted by Charleston Chamber of Commerce.
 "Whereas the Chamber of Commerce has learned that one of its most able and distinguished members has accepted duty and citizenship in another State, it desires to record in fitting terms its profound appreciation of the conspicuous services which he has rendered to the city of Charleston and the State of South Carolina. Fully cognizant that the most valued asset of the community is the loyalty and ability of its citizens, and that the removal of Mr. J. C. Hemphill to a distant scene of endeavor as a circumstance provocative of public regret, it is accordingly moved, that the commercial interests of this city, this chamber feels it to be its privilege, no less than its pleasure, to make formal and grateful acknowledgment to a citizen for services which, for more than a quarter of a century, have been inspired by a loyalty that has never wavered, and a devotion to the public welfare that has never faltered, and an ability that has consistently kept pace with the exigencies of our progress and the progress of the State; and that Mr. Hemphill assumed complete editorial and managerial control of the News and Courier, his city and State were but just struggling into the light from the industrial shadow which enveloped the entire South in consequence of the great War between the States; and the tragic public policies that succeeded it. Speaking from a rostrum that commanded a national audience, he afforded a help, and to hurt the people he represented were as numerous as the days. As the editor of a newspaper exercising a powerful influence throughout the length and breadth of South Carolina, it was possible for him to bring comfort, to exhort to greater effort, to blaze paths in new enterprises and industries, to inspire courage, patience and hope. To say that Mr. Hemphill met and discharged these duties with conspicuous fidelity and distinguished ability is no meagre measure of praise. Fitted in the arena of journalistic debate against the ablest of those who, from prejudice, ignorance or partisan bias, would have misrepresented the people of whom he was a spokesman, and injured the section of which he is a citizen, he has consistently shown to his constituents and their cause. As a champion of the most cherished traditions and ideals of the Southern people, he has long been accorded national repute. Militant always in behalf of private and public virtue, imbued with an abiding faith in the patriotic purposes of his people, he has been the pure Americanism of his section of our common country; he has represented this community in the conflicts of the public opinion in a manner which has inspired and commanded national respect."

Be it resolved, therefore, That the Charleston Chamber of Commerce formally records its regret that Mr. Hemphill is to remove his residence from the city and State; that it express to him its appreciation of his services to Charleston and to South Carolina; and that it assure him of its confidence that he may prosper in his new home, and may live many years to adorn his profession and to continue his conspicuously admirable labors. —Charleston News and Courier.

NEW TAXES OR RETRENCHMENT.

If the present General Assembly of Virginia displayed one-half the zeal in curtailing public expenses and providing in the government of the people a more simple life and a better mode of living that it exhibits in trying to find more subjects upon which to increase the extravagance of expenditure, Virginia might easily be living well within her income on the basis of a reduced rate of taxation, and without detriment to her economy or institutions or to the administration of any department of the government. An increase of taxation is not a burden on the general public because indirectly laid on insurance and other utilities and necessities of modern life. Ultimately and inevitably the burden of increased taxes on people of the Assembly seems to be making the whole State forerunners of taxation, and giving no relief to the Old South and the General Assembly. The better way is to find in retrenchment and reform. There has been no time of peace and plenty in the history of this country since the Civil War. It is harder than at this time, and when the purchasing power of a gold dollar was without precedent, and when the government on how good authority was not prepared to say that purchasing power has declined about 50 per cent. in the past few years, that increased taxes on people and other sources of income are but delusions and snares to promote the interests of the beneficiaries of the tax. The General Assembly has been in a normal and out-of-joint times. —Petersburg Index-Appal.

A product well presented, means an unimpaired reputation. Our services are on hand. —Richmond Advertising Agency, Inc. Mutual Building.

Borrowed Jingles

CUPID IN TOWN.

Oh, send us a post soon
 Whom I love the most,
 Forget about the stars and moon
 And let your heart be true,
 I'm sick of Romeo's love
 Of Odes to Jane and Jerry,
 Love's home is on Manhattan Isle—
 The Thirty-fourth Street ferry.

We didn't have a "country lane"
 When I was courting you,
 And sunsets on a subway train
 Are scarce in New York City.
 But still I do not think
 Much of Love's spirit merry,
 Even though we made our evening tryst
 The Thirty-fourth Street ferry.

We didn't have a "ruined stile"
 At which to do our parting—
 A flat was Kate's domicile
 (And I was her only star).
 No kiss of greeting my reward;
 But when her millinery
 Shook its mane and I adored
 The Thirty-fourth Street ferry.

—Chester Perkins, in New York American.

MERELY JOKING.

The Final Court Reversed.
 "The courts have decided that a woman has no right to open her husband's mail."
 "My wife reversed that decision before it was made." —Houston Post.

A Better Way.

"She is reputed to be a cold beauty. Did you see her mouth with orchids?"
 "No; I sent some very fine imported sausage to her dog." —Pittsburg Post.

Proof Positive.

"They must be married," he suggested.
 "Yes," she replied; "I notice that he always goes out and leaves her alone between the acts." —Chicago Record-Herald.

Will It Grow?

Knicker: "Governor Lindley says every family should have a child."
 Bocker: "We are working up to it gradually by starting with a soldfish." —New York Sun.

Foreign Impudence.

Wigg: "How do you know he's a foreigner?"
 He: "He doesn't know so many ways in which this country could be improved." —Philadelphia Record.

By Order of the Co.

"Why do all the whistling blow at 5 o'clock?" asked the tourist.
 "That is the time when the company's notice to the people to get out and crowd the cars," he was told. —Buffalo Express.

At Least Has Meat.

"You don't make as much fun of hash as you used to," said one boarder.
 "No," answered the other, "I have learned to eat hash. I know so many ways in which this country could be improved." —Philadelphia Record.

THE MERRY MOCKERS.

PHONOGRAPH records should have been made of prophecies uttered two years ago that Theodore Roosevelt would be forgiven his sins after he left office. —Philadelphia Telegraph.

Former Chief Forester Pinchot has been mentioned as a candidate for vice-president. The finger of suspicion points unwaveringly in the direction of the friends and supporters of the Ballinger-New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Denver women have resolved to boycott the middle class. They will refuse to buy hats. Here's a reform that beats the boycott on meat to a standstill. —St. Joseph Gazette.

The President, it is reported, is opposed to the reelection of Senator Dick of Ohio. The Senator, it is reported, will make a contest. Live! Ohio! —Hartford Times.

In the Ballinger-Pinchot controversy it is evidently a mistake in tactics to attempt to bully the young accused. Louis A. Glavis. —Philadelphia Record.

Winter in this section is getting to be as uncertain as a Taft policy. —Albany Argus.

STATE PRESS

The Assembly and the Liquor Bill.

Several bills striking at various phases of the liquor traffic have been introduced in the Virginia Legislature, aside from the bill proposing to restrict the sale of liquor to the right to ask for an election on the question of State-wide prohibition. The latest bill was offered Sunday by Senator Halsey, of Loudoun, for the purpose of the closing of all saloons and installing in their stead the dispensary system of handling liquor. The bill, which is now in the hands of the committee on Temperance, will make it private parties in control, the operators to pay the State a license as at present for the privilege. There is to be no drink- ing place where liquor is sold, only sealed packages of liquor being dispensed. This bill, which if it became a law, would give the State a monopoly of the liquor traffic, might pass if a State-wide election, the temperance forces in and out of the legislature, would not be able to concentrate their efforts on two of the bills now before the Assembly. The first and most important of these is the bill proposing to restrict the sale of liquor to the right to ask for a State-wide election. The other is a "restricted license" bill, which would give the State a monopoly of the liquor traffic, and would make it private parties in control, the operators to pay the State a license as at present for the privilege. There is to be no drinking place where liquor is sold, only sealed packages of liquor being dispensed. This bill, which if it became a law, would give the State a monopoly of the liquor traffic, might pass if a State-wide election, the temperance forces in and out of the legislature, would not be able to concentrate their efforts on two of the bills now before the Assembly. The first and most important of these is the bill proposing to restrict the sale of liquor to the right to ask for a State-wide election. 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